

Come Hell Or High Water by letitbeme

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Summary: Nancy Wheeler always thought of herself as kind of a cynic when it came to the whole romance thing. But, when her brother's relationship with his girlfriend enters what might be it's darkest hour, she realizes she'd do anything to save the love those two crazy kids have between each other.

Come Hell Or High Water

"Hey, Don Juan, Mom wants to use the phone, you can talk to your girlfriend another night." Nancy said poking her head into her brother's room.

Mike was annoyed but understanding.

"You heard that? I'll talk to you later. I love you...not possible! Bye." The last parts he said with a laugh before hanging up the phone.

"Okay, you're good, Mom!" Nancy yelled downstairs before turning back to her brother, "Hitting it big with the "I love yous", eh?"

"Oh, Hell yeah, it's true, you know." Mike said ridiculously confident.

"And what is it that's not possible?"

"Huh?"

"Right at the end. You said "I love you" and then you laughed and said "Not possible."

"Oh, that," Mike said starting to laugh again, "We have this thing where when I say "I love you", she says that she loves me more, and I say that it's not possible because well, the words don't exist for how much I love her and I don't think it's humanly possible for her to love me back even more, maybe an even amount, but, not more."

Nancy couldn't help but chuckle at this, "Ah, young love, so naive and yet, so sweet."

"What's naive about that? I'm gonna marry El one day."

Nancy started laughing even harder, "Okay, sure, whatever you say, bro."

Mike started getting defensive "What? You don't think we have it in us?"

Nancy started walking into Mike's room and sat on his bed, "Well, I

hate to be this frank, but, I highly doubt it."

Mike just looked at her incredulously.

"Mike, you're only fourteen! And this is your first girlfriend. Everything may seem like sunshine and rainbows now, but eventually, you'll tire of each other and you'll move on to other people, that's just the way the world works, bud."

Nancy was expecting Mike to get mad, instead he just started getting a wry little smile on his face.

"All right, little miss the-glass-is-half-empty, care to make it interesting?"

"What, like a bet?"

"Yeah, a bet."

Now Nancy was smiling wryly, "Okay, what the hell, you're on. What are the stakes?"

"Well, you'd say me winning would constitute Me and El getting married one day, right?"

"Yeah, that seems right."

"Okay, well, when that happens, notice I didn't say if but when, you have to pay for half the wedding."

"Half? Try a quarter."

"A third."

"Deal" Nancy said shaking Mike's hand, "But, it has to happen organically."

"What do you mean?"

"Meaning it has to come about naturally, you can't stay together just for this bet's sake or run off and get married, like, next week or something."

"Oh, no, neither of those sounds like it'd be worth it."

"Good, and if I win?"

"You mean if El and I do break up, which will never happen."

"Yeah."

Mike stopped to think for a minute.

"Okay, you and Jonathan are moving to the city after you graduate next year, right?"

"Yeah?"

"If you win, I'll pay the rent on your apartment for...three months."

"Five."

"Four."

"Deal...again." Nancy said shaking Mike's hand again before he added, "This, too, would also have to happen organically."

"You mean, I can't use a bad situation to break you guys up or something like that?"

"You got it."

That's fair, and for the record, I wouldn't do something that mean or dishonest just for a stupid bet."

"That's actually nice to hear."

"Okay, then, we have an agreement." Nancy said before getting up to leave.

"You're gonna lose." Mike said, very sure of himself.

"We'll see."

"Seriously, she's the love of my life and I'm gonna marry her, come hell or high water!" Mike yelled out his door.

FIVE MONTHS LATER

Nancy thought it was kind of amazing that with finals and graduation right around the corner, her and Jonathan were able to get a peaceful Friday night all to themselves, her parents were out for the weekend, Mike's friends were busy, the boy himself was staying at his girlfriend's place, it was perfect.

They were snuggled together on the couch with a bowl of popcorn watching a movie they rented and listening to it rain outside when they heard the door open and wet footsteps slowly come in, Nancy looked up and saw it was Mike.

"Mike? I thought you were staying at the cabin tonight?"

Mike turned towards them and that's when they saw he was soaking wet and had a wide-eyed thousand yard stare on his face.

"Oh. Hey, Nancy. Hey Jonathan" he said in a low, dull voice, "Didn't mean to disturb you, I'm just gonna go to bed."

Nancy immediately got up to look at him.

"Mike, did...did you walk all the way home in the rain?"

Mike looked down and it looked like he was just now realizing how drenched he was and responded in the same low monotone "Oh, yeah, I guess I did."

"Jesus Chri-, Jonathan, get a towel, let's get this off" She said taking off Mike's jacket and shoes, "What the hell were you thinking? You could have gotten Pneumonia or something."

Mike didn't answer, he just stared off into space.

Nancy started to notice just how red and bloodshot Mike's eyes were, almost like he had been crying.

Jonathan came running back into the room, "Here's the towel."

Nancy immediately wrapped it around Mike, "Here, try and warm

up." she said rubbing the towel on him.

Still, no response.

Nancy was starting to get worried.

"Mike, did...did something bad happen?"

Nothing.

Jonathan spoke up, "Let's get him in here and sit him down."

"Good idea."

They both led Mike towards the couch, him just barely moving his feet, and sat him down on the couch.

Nancy looked right in her little brother's eyes, "Mike, you're really starting to scare me. Please, say something, anything."

Mike moved his head down and finally said, "You were right, Nancy."

"Right about what?"

"Me and El, young love, all that crap" his voice wavering.

"Mike...what happened?"

Mike still had his head down and moved his hand up to his eyes, it looked like he was wiping away tears before he could speak.

"So," he choked out, "So, me and El got into...a pretty explosive fight. We were both yelling at each other and suddenly, she said "Maybe we just shouldn't be together anymore" and I got upset and ran out, so...so, yeah, we broke up." he was barely holding back tears at this point.

"What?" Nancy said, too shocked to say anything else.

"Oh, you poor fella." Jonathan said, putting his hand on Mike's shoulder.

"Mikey, come here." Nancy softly said wrapping her arms around her

brother and massaging his back, "I'm so sorry, honey."

Mike couldn't hold it back anymore and started weeping loud and hard, occasionally getting some words in.

"I...I just thought we were gonna be together forever...I thought we'd live together, get married, have babies, but...but now I know that was all just stupid bullshit!" Mike yelled in between heartwrenching sobs.

Nancy continued holding her little brother feeling his tears soak her shoulder, not caring a little about it, all she could think was how heartbroken Mike was before eventually he pulled away.

"I just want you to know, Nance" Mike said attempting to collect himself, "I have every intention of keeping my end of the bargain."

Nancy was confused, "Mike, what are you talking about?"

"Remember the bet? We agreed that if El and I...you know" he said struggling not to start crying again, "That I'd pay four months rent on your apartment,...well...just send me a bill when you get around to it and I'll see what I can do."

Mike got up and started walking out of the room before Nancy stopped and grabbed him by the arm, "Mike, I don't give a good goddamn about whatever stupid bet we made. What I care about is you and Eleven being together."

Mike eventually got out of her grip, "You don't have to concern yourself, Nancy, like I said, you were right all along, it wasn't meant to be" he said before going upstairs to his room.

Nancy sat down in shock next to Jonathan.

"The poor, poor kid." Jonathan said, "His heart must be in pieces...I wish there was something we could do."

Nancy realized there was something she could do, it was risky, but, what other choice did she have?

"Come on, come on, somebody, anybody pick up, pick up the phone."

Nancy said listening to the phone at the other end of the line ring and ring.

"Hello, Hopper residence." said a kind voice on the other end.

"Hey, Mrs. Hopper, sorry, Joyce, this is Nancy."

"Oh, hi, Nancy, sorry, I can't talk right now, kind of a rough night, you probably know why."

"Yes, I do know why, Mike doesn't know I'm calling though, and you have to let me talk to Jane."

"Nancy,-"

"No, listen, I practically heard my little brother's hopes and dreams get smashed into a million pieces and so help me God, I will not rest until those two are back together for good the way they belong!" now Nancy was the one choking on tears.

Silence.

"Nancy, that's a nice thought, God knows I agree with you, but, Jane isn't in a talking mood right now."

"That's okay, I've been there, just do what I tell you and this might work."

Nancy gave Joyce some instructions, to which she went and knocked on her stepdaughter's door.

"Jane? Honey? There's someone on the phone who wants to speak with you."

"GO AWAY, MOM! I DON'T WANT TO TALK TO ANYBODY!"

Joyce lifted the phone back up, "See, Nancy? I told you...What? Okay, I'll give it a try. Jane? The person on the phone said you can hear what they have to say and then you're allowed to tell them to...to buzz off if you want."

Joyce lifted the phone up again and hung up when she heard a click

and another voice "Hello?"

"Hey, El, It's Nancy."

"Hey, Nancy, look, whatever Mike told you to say, I don't wanna hear it."

"Mike doesn't know I'm calling, El, I want to talk to you, can you please tell me what you were fighting about?"

El sat up and started to collect herself before answering Nancy, "Well, it started when I got home late from school, I had debate club, and Mike was upset that, in his words, I'm always so busy and It feels like he doesn't even have a girlfriend anymore. Then, I started yelling at him about how possessive he can get, and he started making comments about some guys in debate that he's been jealous of, not an uncommon occurrence as of late, and then it all snowballed from there and got worse and worse and did he tell you what I said?"

"Yeah, he did."

"Well, I didn't mean it and it just slipped out, yeah, I was mad, but, I would rather live with his jealousy and everything else than without. But, now, he probably doesn't even want to hear from me."

"If I get him on the phone, would you be willing to talk this out?" Nancy asked, praying to every god she could think of that this would work.

"Yeah, absolutely."

"Okay, well, just wait a minute." Nancy said setting the phone down, turning to Jonathan, "Listen in, and hang up if Mike picks up."

"Okay."

Nancy went upstairs and knocked on Mike's door.

"Mike" *knock, knock, knock*, "Mike?"

She heard something hard hit the door and "GO AWAY, NANCY! I DON'T WANNA TALK!"

"I have someone on the phone who wants to talk to you."

"Who is it?"

"Pick up the phone and you'll see."

Silence.

"Mike, just do this for me...please?"

She heard a small click and "Hello?...Hi...no, listen, El, just let me talk first, I just wanna say...I was just being jealous and stupid and I overreacted and I am so, so, a million, billion, trillion times sorry for every single thing I said...What? No, no, I know you love debate club and I would never want you to quit...yeah, I have issues, they're my problems, I'll deal with them, I shouldn't have put that crap on you...yeah...yeah." His voice was getting calmer and smoother now, "Yeah, I know,...no, you don't have to say that...how about we settle and say we were both stupid and said things we didn't mean?" Nancy could tell he was actually getting happy. "Yeah...yeah...of course we are, of course, I still love you."

"*Wait for it, wait for it...*" Nancy thought to herself.

"Not possible" he said with a laugh.

"*Yes! Thank you! Thank you!*" Nancy thought heading back downstairs before hearing "HANG ON A MINUTE, NANCE!" stopping her in her tracks.

She went back up and Mike opened his door and stepped out now changed into some dry pajamas and with a big smile on his face.

"Did you...do this?"

Nancy was sheepish but admitted, "If you mean call her, yeah, I did that part."

She could tell Mike was at a loss for words and was starting to well up, though she could tell it was from happiness this time.

"Nancy..I...I don't even..." Mike stammered not knowing what to say

before settling on "Thank you."

"You're welcome, little brother, good night."

"Good night." Mike said before going back into his room.

Nancy went back and joined Jonathan on the couch, Jonathan was still clearly nervous.

"How'd it go? Are they okay?"

Nancy couldn't help but smile, "They're gonna be just fine."

Jonathan relaxed considerably, "You're sure?"

"Oh yeah" Nancy said, "Young love, it just needs that little extra push in the right direction."

"Good, I'll be honest and this may sound silly, but, I don't know what I would do if they broke up for good...you know, you did a wonderful thing tonight, Nancy."

"Yeah,well,...don't worry, Jon, they're meant to be together forever...come hell or high water."

Jonathan was surprised at his girlfriend, "Well, when did you become such a romantic?"

"I'm...not sure."

10 YEARS LATER

After being engaged for only two months, Mike and Eleven were surprised at just how much went into planning a wedding. But, what surprised them even more was Nancy insisting on helping the planning of, well, everything. Especially, considering she was two months into her second pregnancy and, to top it off, she and Jonathan found out it would be twins this time. They were very flattered and said Nancy didn't have to do this much, but she was relentless and they finally let her in on all of it.

"Okay, so, we're meeting with the caterer and they're gonna give you a list of 15 appetizers that you're gonna have to narrow down to 12." Nancy said going through her pile of paperwork.

"That sounds doable" Mike said looking at Eleven who agreed non-verbally.

"Good, oh, and tomorrow, we're meeting with the DJ, you can go over what songs you want him to play and when, and what songs you want him to avoid."

"No chicken dance!" El blurted out, "I swear, I will leave my own ceremony if he plays the chicken dance!"

Mike patted her on the back calming her down.

"That's totally fair, also, kids, I know it's your wedding and everything, but, the bill is starting to get kinda high."

"It's a wedding, that kind of thing's inevitable." El said, ironically calmer talking about money.

Mike chose this moment to chime in, "On that subject, I went ahead and calculated an estimate for your share of the wedding." he said, handing Nancy a folded-up paper.

Nancy was nervous but took it, "Speaking of inevitable..." she joked, opening it only to find a blank sheet of paper, confusing her.

"Mike, there's nothing on here."

Mike just gave her that wry smile both women have gotten way too used to over the years and it clicked for Nancy.

"Mike...you...you're not..."

"Nancy, you're the best big sister in the world for volunteering to help plan all of this, that's thanks enough. Besides" he said, putting his arm around Eleven, who was also smiling, "I remember a cold, rainy night a long time ago, when you helped put this back together" he said gesturing to the two of them, "And I figured that's good enough reason to forget about a stupid bet."

Nancy was so moved and overwhelmed with emotion, "I love you both so much" she couldn't hold back and started crying, "You know, you can't do stuff like this to a pregnant woman!" she yelled before taking the napkins Mike and El were handing her.